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UNCLAS OTTAWA 003233

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SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: DEMARCHE -IRANIAN PRESIDENT'S INCREASING EXTREMISM

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1. (SBU) Poloff discussed reftel with Foreign Affairs Deputy Director for Iran and Iraq Jeffrey McLaren on October 28. McLaren concurred with the points in our non-paper. He said that upon learning of Ahmadi-Nejad's remarks on October 26, Assistant Deputy Minister David Mulroney immediately brought in the Iranian Charge d'Affaires, Abbas Assemi, to convey Canada's outrage. Apparently, Assemi was "completely unaware" of Ahmadi-Nejad's speech, though he said he would report Canada's reaction to Tehran.

2. (U) Foreign Minister Pettigrew vigorously condemned the extremist statements of the Iranian President regarding Israel in the following statement issued October 26:

"On behalf of all Canadians, I want to vigorously condemn the remarks made by Iran's President. We are in the 21st century. Canada will never accept such hatred, intolerance and anti-Semitism. Never.

We believe that this extreme view does not reflect the opinion of the Iranian people.

The comments are all the more troubling given Iran's nuclear ambitions and its refusal to cooperate fully with International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors. This refusal underlines the need for all countries to stand together to ensure that Iran is prevented from developing nuclear weaponry. In fact, during her recent visit to Ottawa, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and I discussed how to

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address nuclear proliferation in Iran, including the possibility that the UN Security Council may have to send a strong message."

3. (U) Prime Minister Martin reiterated Canada's condemnation of Ahmadi-Nejad's remarks in the House of Commons on October 27.

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WILKINS